

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE
Washington, D.C. 20511

January 30, 2009

Colleagues:

Today I was sworn in as our country's third Director of National Intelligence. Having served with many of you in the past, I know first hand no group works harder and is more dedicated to our nation's security. I am honored to join your team.

We are the nation's first line of defense, seeking out both threats to the country and opportunities to advance its interests around the world. We bring knowledge and understanding of the international environment, and especially of our adversaries, to the President, the national security decision makers and to the Congress. We provide intelligence support to the officials who execute the policies, and we undertake action when missions are assigned to us.

Intelligence is a team sport, and all players are important. The Intelligence Community today is stronger than it has ever been, and all share credit for its successes and responsibility to make ever greater improvements in the years ahead. Information technology is moving fast, creating as many threats as opportunities. Our adversaries -- whether traditional states or non-state actors -- are evolving and learning rapidly, and we must stay ahead. I have no doubt that you are up to the task.

Leading and managing the Intelligence Community, I will be guided by the following priorities:

- To serve as the principal intelligence advisor to the President and his national security team. We will continue to enhance the quality of our analysis and the depth and range of collection that supports it. We will integrate contributions from all IC partners, call it as we see it and lay out the alternatives with clear statements of our level of confidence in our judgments.
- To make the whole of the Intelligence Community greater than the sum of its parts. All seventeen intelligence organizations can expect clear mission direction. Common areas such as personnel, intra-IC communications, clearances and classification deserve special emphasis, as do missions that require the capabilities of more than one agency for success. All of us are then accountable for mission success
- To assess mission and resources and then provide resources adequate to meet assigned responsibilities and build future capabilities.

In nominating me, President Obama stated that in today's world, "good intelligence is not a luxury; it is a necessity." The President and Congress have made clear the need for transparency and accountability while most of our work remains outside of the public view. We will do so under a clear legal framework and in partnership with legislative oversight. With new national leadership comes expectation to meet tomorrow's challenges. I am confident we can meet and exceed the expectations President Obama and the Congress have articulated.

It is my honor to serve with you, advancing our profound mission and ensuring our nation's safety and security for ourselves and for generations to come. I look forward to meeting more of you in the coming days and months. I thank you for serving and strengthening our Intelligence Community.

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Dennis C. Blair